

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 141133Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 815

S E C R E T BANGKOK 2693

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, US, TH

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR STATE VISIT BY KING PHUMIPHON

REF: STATE 020533

1. THIS AFTERNOON PRINCE THAWISAN LADAWAN, THE KING'S PERSONAL PRIVATE SECRETARY, CALLED UPON ME AT MY INVITATION TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF THE KING ACCEPTING PRESIDENT FORD'S INVITATION FOR A STATE VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES.

2. I CONVEYED THIS INVITATION TO THAWISAN AND INDICATED THAT I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE HIS INFORMAL VIEWS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A STATE VISIT. HE TOLD ME THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THE KING WOULD LIKE TO GO SO FAR FROM THAILAND AT THIS CRITICAL TRANSITION PERIOD. HE ALSO SAID THAT A TRIP OF THIS KIND WOULD BE EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE AND THAT THE KING MIGHT NOT WISH TO SUBJECT HIMSELF TO A TYPE OF CRITICISM THAT MIGHT BE LAUNCHED AGAINST SUCH A VISIT BY SOME OF THE ACTIVIST GROUPS IN THAILAND.

3. ADDITIONALLY, HE TOLD ME THAT THE KING HAD NOT YET FULLY RECOVERED FROM THE ILLNESS WHICH HAS AFFECTED HIM FOR THE PAST MONTH. AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, HE PICKED UP A BAD CASE OF FLU WHICH LATER TURNED INTO PNEUMONIA. HE HAD MANY, MANY DAYS OF EXTREMELY HIGH TEMPERATURES AND IS NOT YET FULLY RECOVERED. HE WILL BE GIVEN AN EXAMINATION TOMORROW

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TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE PNEUMONIA HAS BEEN ARRESTED.

THE DOCTORS, ACCORDING TO THAWISAN, BELIEVE THAT THE KING SHOULD HAVE AN ADDITIONAL MONTH OF AS COMPLETE REST AS POSSIBLE. HE BELIEVES THAT THIS REST WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE PALACE IN CHIANG MAI.

4. ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, THAWISAN TOLD ME THAT THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF CONCERN ABOUT THE NEWSPAPER STORY WHICH RECENTLY APPEARED IN THE LONDON DAILY MIRROR CONCERNING THE ALLEGED PORTRAIT OF THE QUEEN IN THE NUDE. THAWISAN TOLD ME THAT THIS PICTURE, AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF NUDE PORTRAITS, WERE PAINTED BY THE KING AND THAT THEY HAD BEEN DISPLAYED ON THE PALACE WALLS IN THE CHITLADA RAHOTHON PALACE IN BANGKOK. THAWISAN PRESUMED THAT SOMEBODY, WHILE VISITING, HAD TAKEN A PHOTOGRAPH OF ONE OF THESE PORTRAITS WHICH PROVIDED THE BASIS FOR THE LONDON DAILY MIRROR STORY.

5. THAWISAN ALSO INFORMED ME THAT PRASIT, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HAD AN APPOINTMENT AT 4 O'CLOCK ON FEBRUARY 15 AND WOULD AT THAT TIME RECEIVE THE KING'S APPROVAL OF SENI AS THE PRIME MINISTER.

6. THAWISAN HIMSELF EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN AT SENI AS NOT BEING STRONG ENOUGH TO DEAL WITH MANY OF THE DOMESTIC PROBLEMS AFFECTING THAILAND; IN PARTICULAR, WITH THE TERRORIST INSURGENCIES UNDERWAY IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

7. AT THE CONCLUSION OF OUR CONVERSATION, I ASKED THAWISAN TO PERSONALLY CONVEY PRESIDENT FORD'S INFORMAL INVITATION TO HIS MAJESTY AND ASKED HIM TO LET ME KNOW WHAT THE KING'S OWN RESPONSE WOULD BE. KINTNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KING, INVITATIONS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO02693
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750055-0925
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750243/aaaabmoi.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: STATE 020533
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 NOV 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <30 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA, 3.4.X6, (THAI ROYAL FAMILY)>; RELEASED <12 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSAL FOR STATE VISIT BY KING PHUMIPHON
TAGS: PDIP, US, TH, (PHUMIPHON ADUNYADET)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006